

SEC. —07. ENFORCEABILITY AND LEGAL EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC RECORDS.

Electronic records submitted or maintained in accordance with procedures developed under this title, or electronic signatures or other forms of electronic authentication used in accordance with such procedures, shall not be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability because such records are in electronic form.

SEC. —08. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

Except as provided by law, information collected in the provision of electronic signature services for communications with an executive agency, as provided by this title, shall only be used or disclosed by persons who obtain, collect, or maintain such information as a business or government practice, for the purpose of facilitating such communications, or with the prior affirmative consent of the person about whom the information pertains.

SEC. —09. APPLICATION WITH INTERNAL REVENUE LAWS.

No provision of this title shall apply to the Department of the Treasury or the Internal Revenue Service to the extent that such provision—

(1) involves the administration of the internal revenue laws; or

(2) conflicts with any provision of the Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 or the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

SEC. —10. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title:

(1) **ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE.**—The term “electronic signature” means a method of signing an electronic message that—

(A) identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic message; and

(B) indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic message.

(2) **EXECUTIVE AGENCY.**—The term “Executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

AMENDMENT NO. 3721, AS MODIFIED

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I send to the desk a modification to amendment No. 3721.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment will be so modified.

The amendment (No. 3721), as modified, is as follows:

On page 17, beginning with line 18, strike through line 21 on page 19 and insert the following:

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**—There is established a commission to be known as the Advisory Commission on Electronic Commerce (in this title referred to as the “Commission”). The Commission shall—

(1) be composed of 19 members appointed in accordance with subsection (b), including the chairperson who shall be selected by the members of the Commission from among themselves; and

(2) conduct its business in accordance with the provisions of this title.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commissioners shall serve for the life of the Commission. The membership of the Commission shall be as follows:

(A) 3 representatives from the Federal Government, comprised of the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the United States Trade Representative (or their respective delegates).

(B) 8 representatives from State and local governments (one such representative shall be from a State or local government that does not impose a sales tax and one rep-

resentative shall be from a state that does not impose an income tax).

(C) 8 representatives of the electronic commerce industry (including small business), telecommunications carriers, local retail businesses, and consumer groups, comprised of—

(i) 5 individuals appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(ii) 3 individuals appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(iii) 5 individuals appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(iv) 3 individuals appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT
AGREEMENT—H.R. 10

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 10 at 5 p.m., Thursday, October 8.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERNET TAX FREEDOM ACT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 3719, AS MODIFIED, AS AMENDED

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 15 minutes, with 10 minutes on this side, controlled by the Senator from Alaska, and 5 minutes controlled by the Senator from North Dakota, that no second-degree amendments be in order, and immediately following that, there be a vote on the Murkowski tabling motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question will first come on the first-degree amendment.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I believe Senator MURKOWSKI will be seeking to table the underlying amendment.

Mr. MURKOWSKI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I repeat the request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I didn't hear the request. Can I hear it again?

Mr. MCCAIN. It is that there be 15 minutes on a Murkowski tabling motion, with 10 minutes under the control of the Senator from Alaska, 5 minutes under the control of the Senator from North Dakota, with no intervening second-degree amendments, immediately followed by a vote.

Mr. GRAMM. No objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MURKOWSKI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President I rise in opposition to the amendment being offered to grandfather existing taxes on Internet services.

This amendment undermines the fundamental integrity of the underlying bill because all state and local taxing

jurisdictions would not be under the exact same moratorium. It rewards those states and municipalities that raced to set up discriminatory taxes on Internet services and places them in a better position to raise revenue than those states that have chosen not to act.

More importantly, it sets the precedent that some states, but not all states, can levy taxes that harm interstate commerce. This amendment makes the Internet Tax Moratorium a piece-meal moratorium, not a real moratorium.

I ask my colleagues to consider why we are considering this Internet tax moratorium. As all of us recognize, the Internet is a massive global network that spans not only every state in the Union, but international borders. As the Commerce committee found, Internet access services are inherently a matter of interstate and foreign commerce within the jurisdiction of the United States Congress. In fact, it has been estimated that if the Congress does not make a policy decision regarding taxation of Internet services, more than 30,000 separate taxing jurisdictions within the United States could establish their own taxes on Internet transactions.

Because of the chaos that would ensue, we have decided to place a halt on Internet taxes and allow a commission to study this issue and make recommendations to the Congress. Yet the amendment that the Senator from Oregon proposes would reward those jurisdictions that have already decided to tax Internet services. Why should we grandfather those jurisdictions?

If it is appropriate for states and localities to impose taxes on Internet services than all states should be permitted to adopt such taxes. Alaska should be given that opportunity just as much as North Dakota and South Dakota. But under the Internet Tax Moratorium legislation, my state does not have that option but the Dakotas can continue their taxes because they adopted those taxes prior to this moratorium.

And if it is not appropriate for states and localities to impose taxes on Internet services, than not states nor localities should be permitted to adopt these taxes.

I believe this amendment is not only discriminatory but undermines the fundamental idea underlying this bill. As I noted earlier, the Internet is inherently about Interstate Commerce and we in Congress are about to make a decision that no local taxes should be imposed on Internet services until Congress receives the Commission's recommendations. I believe we should make this moratorium uniform, not piece-meal as the Senator from Oregon proposes.

Otherwise, we are encouraging every state in the union to rush to the state legislature every time a new technology comes along and adopt a taxing scheme on the new technology, secure

in the knowledge that should Congress decide to impose a moratorium on such a new tax, that state's taxes will be grandfathered.

Moreover, there is no rational basis to grandfather these state and local taxes on what everyone agrees is interstate commerce. We have asked a Commission of experts to make recommendations regarding Internet taxes. Although I cannot pre-judge what the Commission will recommend, it is probable that the Commission will make three recommendations. It will make a decision that state and local taxation of Internet services are appropriate or inappropriate. It may decide that some taxes, such as taxes on "pipeline" services like Erols or value-added online services like America Online are appropriate but that taxes on interstate product sales on the Internet are inappropriate.

What is certain is that the Commission will not recommend that the only Internet taxes that are appropriate are those that are levied by the states that are proposed to be grandfathered. That would make no sense and would probably be unconstitutional. For that reason alone, we should not permit this grandfather.

Mr. President, one of the most important reasons I believe we should not grandfather any of the Internet taxes is because a decision we make on grandfathering will send a signal to our trading partners that if they adopt taxes on Internet commerce today, those taxes will likely be grandfathered if and when an international agreement on taxation of Internet commerce is reached in the future.

Why shouldn't Brazil or Germany or Canada establish taxes today on Internet commerce and then claim that since these taxes were adopted prior to an international agreement, they should be grandfathered just like the United States grandfathered similar taxes?

Mr. President, there is ample precedent for such a scenario. Many of the tariff and non-tariff barriers that the United States has confronted in the past 50 years have covered practices that were insulated by the original GATT grandfathering rules that were adopted more than 50 years ago. In fact, there have been a number of instances where our foreign trading partners have used the GATT grandfather clause to defend measures that would otherwise violate our GATT rights. A number of those involved foreign tax regimes.

For example, the European Union relied on the GATT grandfather clause to defend their system of territorial taxation and income shifting rules that clearly constituted an illegal export subsidy. Similarly, Brazil used the grandfather clause to defend internal taxes of general application (i.e., sales taxes) that discriminated against goods imported from other GATT members. And Canada relied on the grandfather clause to defend its interprovincial re-

strictions on the sale of beer and other malt beverages, which included discriminatory charges on imports of competing products from the United States.

Mr. President, the Internet as a means of communication and commerce is in its infancy. Commerce on the Internet is projected to grow by several thousand percent in the next five years. And who stands to benefit the most from that growth? Companies based in the United States will be the largest beneficiaries. I think there can be no doubt about that.

We in the United States invented the Internet. We have been the first country to begin to exploit its benefits. We are leading the world in Internet commerce and the world is watching everything we do and trying to figure out how to prevent American domination of this new medium.

One way to slow American domination of the Internet is for foreign countries to begin to establish taxing regimes on products and information generated from the United States. It is not hard to imagine our foreign trading partners developing taxing schemes designed to protect their domestic manufacturers from competition from more efficient American competitors selling in their country via the Internet. Nor is it difficult to imagine that some of the more repressive regimes in the world might want to come up with punitive access taxes that functionally prevent their citizens from reading American on-line newspapers and magazines. In the name of "cultural sovereignty," I can imagine that some countries will adopt special taxing regimes to restrict access to Internet web pages that are in English.

Mr. President, the precedent we set by grandfathering Internet taxes currently in place will be closely watched by our trading partners. They will follow our model because the United States has established all of the standards and protocols for the Internet.

We should send a message to our trading partners that we will not grandfather any taxes on Internet commerce. Unless we do that, I fear that when our negotiators sit down and attempt to negotiate away discriminatory foreign taxes on Internet services, our foreign trading partners will use the grandfather model in this bill as a reason their taxing regime should be maintained in place. That is surely not the precedent we want to set.

Finally, Mr. President, if we table this amendment we will ultimately not be voting on whether the moratorium should be three years or four years. The Senate has already spoken on this issue and if the grandfathering amendment is tabled, the Chairman of the Committee will certainly offer another amendment that we can accept that will extend the moratorium for four years.

I move to table the amendment on grandfathering state Internet taxes.

Mr. MACK. Mr. President, I oppose this amendment which would allow

some states to tax the Internet but not others. The moratorium on Internet taxation must be uniform, applying equally to all states and all local taxing jurisdictions without exception.

Congress is taking an extraordinary, though not unprecedented, step in preempting a taxing power of the states. The people of the United States, through the Constitution, charge Congress with the responsibility of ensuring that states do not interfere with interstate commerce. This power is rarely exercised in the context of taxation, and is a power that we take very seriously.

Use of this extraordinary power is required to prevent the heavy hands of government from stifling the economic growth potential of Internet commerce. We have now just a glimpse of the future of commerce, and a complete revolution in the way people transact business is within sight. We are on the threshold of exciting times, in which information about products will move quicker and farther than ever imagined, in which the elderly, the handicapped, and people living in remote rural areas can participate in world markets without ever leaving their homes. A moratorium is necessary to prevent the taxing authorities of 50 states, over 6,000 localities, and the federal government from taking near-sighted actions that jeopardize this future of commerce.

A threat to interstate commerce so severe as to require a national moratorium cannot be tolerated in any state. If Congress were to grandfather those states that have already imposed Internet taxes, we would be setting a terrible precedent. This "Early Bird Special" exception gives states the incentive to rush to impose new taxes on new technologies. This is not the kind of race we want to encourage.

And if Congress can impose a moratorium on some states but not others, will future Congresses attempt to disadvantage individual states in this manner? The defenders of a grandfather clause cast their argument as one of states' rights. But establishing the principle that a moratorium must apply equally to all states protect states from unwarranted infringements upon their power, by preventing the federal government from isolating a minority of states for adverse treatment. And I should also point out that states do not have the right to interfere with interstate commerce—the power to regulate interstate commerce was delegated to the national government, not retained by the states.

The United States should set a strong example and preempt all Internet taxes until a rational, national approach to Internet taxation is developed. If we fail to do so, we undermine attempts to persuade our trading partners that barriers to global electronic commerce should be removed. We have the opportunity to lead the world in the area of Internet commerce, and we should make our cause the cause of freedom.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the efforts by the Senator from Alaska. My understanding is that he is seeking to table the underlying first-degree amendment, the McCain amendment. The McCain amendment includes the grandfather provision which preserves the existing Internet access taxes. In my judgment, this makes the moratorium a forward-looking moratorium, and will not preempt existing taxes.

It also deals with State and local taxing authorities by including a State and local tax savings provision, which makes it clear that no other State or local tax will be affected. In other words, it protects against the unintended consequences that may well occur unless we have that savings clause.

I really think that it is important that we not support the motion offered by the Senator from Alaska.

The third provision I want to mention in the first-degree amendment that he is attempting to table is a provision ensuring that this moratorium will not affect any pending or existing liabilities. Currently there are companies that may have failed to pay some taxes that would have a current liability under current valid existing laws, and we would not want this moratorium to have the unintended consequence of interrupting those liabilities either.

As I understand it, we have a first-degree amendment, and now a motion to table that. I hope that the motion to table will not prevail. I will vote against it. I will be, by that vote, supporting the underlying first-degree McCain amendment.

Mr. MCCAIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Has all time expired?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It has not expired.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I yield all time back that's remaining on our side. It would be my intention when all time is yielded to ask for the yeas and nays. Excuse me, Mr. President. It would be my intention to move to table the pending amendment when all time is expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from North Dakota yield back his time?

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I make a point of order that a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. DORGAN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The legislative clerk continued with the call of the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. For the convenience of Senators who have plans this evening and were told that we would have a vote, I would ask unanimous consent that further proceedings under the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DORGAN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is objection.

The legislative clerk continued with the call of the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, we obviously have a problem. The Senator from Florida is insisting on a point of order that will basically gut this legislation. I want to go ahead and vote on the Murkowski amendment. If the Senator from Florida wants to destroy this bill, which is supported by literally everyone except him, he is free to do that.

Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. GRAHAM addressed the Chair.

Mr. MCCAIN. All time has expired?

Mr. GRAHAM. Point of personal privilege.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I am sorry, my good friend from Arizona has on several previous occasions made statements that have become, I think, excessively personal and not factually correct.

I am prepared to vote on this bill right now, and I will vote for the bill in its current form. What the issue is, is offering an amendment that I question as to its germanity to this bill and that I might raise a point of order on that germanity. I don't consider that to be an inappropriate or even a particularly hostile act. That is a matter of the rules of the Senate. It either is or is not germane in this postcloture environment.

I do not accept the characterization that I am, in some malicious way, standing in the way of the bill. I am perfectly prepared to vote at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I move to table the amendment and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to lay on the table amendment No. 3719, as modified, as amended. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. GLENN) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLINGS) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 28, nays 69, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 306 Leg.]

YEAS—28

Ashcroft	Gregg	Nickles
Campbell	Hagel	Roth
Cochran	Helms	Santorum
Collins	Hutchinson	Shelby
Coverdell	Hutchison	Smith (NH)
D'Amato	Jeffords	Stevens
Faircloth	Lott	Thomas
Gamm	Mack	Torricelli
Grams	McConnell	
Grassley	Murkowski	

NAYS—69

Abraham	Domenici	Leahy
Akaka	Dorgan	Levin
Allard	Durbin	Lieberman
Baucus	Enzi	Lugar
Bennett	Feingold	McCain
Biden	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bingaman	Ford	Moseley-Braun
Bond	Frist	Moynihan
Boxer	Gorton	Murray
Breaux	Graham	Reed
Brownback	Harkin	Reid
Bryan	Hatch	Robb
Bumpers	Inhofe	Roberts
Burns	Inouye	Rockefeller
Byrd	Johnson	Sarbanes
Chafee	Kempthorne	Sessions
Cleland	Kennedy	Smith (OR)
Coats	Kerrey	Snowe
Conrad	Kerry	Thompson
Craig	Kohl	Thurmond
Daschle	Kyl	Warner
DeWine	Landrieu	Wellstone
Dodd	Lautenberg	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Glenn	Hollings	Specter
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The motion to lay on the table the amendment (No. 3719), as modified, as amended, was rejected.

Mr. MCCAIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, first of all, let me say for my colleagues where we are on this bill.

We believe that we had an agreement that there would be this vote on the Murkowski amendment to table, and then we would proceed to adopt a previously agreed to amendment that had been agreed to by the Senator from North Dakota who has been managing the bill and others that have been involved in the legislation. Apparently, that was not agreed to by the Senator

from Florida who intends to at least at this time challenge on the issue of germaneness the amendment that the Senator from North Dakota, the Senator from Oregon, I, the Senator from Wyoming, and others had agreed to, which has to do with the definition of what are discriminatory taxes.

This, obviously, germane point of order would carry, or there is a likelihood that it would. That would reduce the effectiveness or the impact of this bill to the point where it would be nearly meaningless.

The Senator from Florida has told me that he will work overnight with us and with others to try to craft some agreement or relook at the entire issue. I hope that he will do so.

After the vote at 11 tomorrow on VA-HUD, I will then propose amendment No. 3711. At that time, if the Senator from Florida still wishes to, obviously he can challenge the amendment on point of order concerning whether the amendment is germane or not.

Mr. President, I think everybody realizes how important this legislation is. I would very much hate to see it derailed at this point in time.

But the amendment, 3711, is vital to this legislation. Some may ask why we didn't propose it earlier. That is because it was part of a package of negotiation that we were in with the Senator from North Dakota, and others.

I respect the right of the Senator from Florida to object on germaneness grounds. That is his right as a Senator. I do not challenge that.

Mr. WYDEN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. McCAIN. I ask unanimous consent to yield to the Senator from Oregon without losing my right to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. I will be very brief, I say to the chairman and colleagues. The hour is late.

All we seek to do is to have technological neutrality. We are not going to tax catalogs. We also don't want to tax web sites. That is all this is about—preventing that kind of discriminatory tax.

I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, these things happen as we consider legislation. There are very strongly held views on this issue, especially by the Senator from Florida who, as a former Governor, understands the impact of these issues on his State. I understand that and appreciate that. But I want to be clear that my interpretation and that of the Senator from Oregon and the proponents of this legislation are that if we do not allow the amendment 3711, then the legislation itself would be rendered largely meaningless.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GOVERNMENT PAPERWORK ELIMINATION ACT

Mr. ABRAMHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about S. 2107, the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, a bill I introduced in April along with Senators WYDEN, McCAIN and REED. This bill has been added as an amendment to the Internet Tax Freedom Act and I want to thank Senators McCAIN and HOLLINGS and Senator THOMPSON, for taking the time and effort to work with me in advancing this legislation. Without their active support and participation, this bill would not have progressed as far as it has.

This bill amends the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 to allow for the use of electronic submission of Federal forms to the Federal government with the use of an electronic signature within five years from the date of enactment. It is intended to bring the federal government into the electronic age, in the process saving American individuals and companies millions of dollars and hundreds of hours currently wasted on government paperwork.

The bill also includes provisions to protect the private sector and ensure a level playing field for companies competing in the development of electronic signature technologies. It mandates that regulations promulgated by the Office of Management and Budget and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration be compatible with standards and technologies used commercially. This will ensure that no one industry or technology receives favorable consideration.

The bill also requires Federal agencies to accept multiple methods of electronic submission if the agency expects to receive 50,000 or more electronic submittals of a particular form. This requirement will ensure that no single electronic signature technology is permitted to unfairly dominate the market.

This legislation also takes several steps to help the public feel more secure in the use of electronic signatures. If people are going to send money or share private information with the government, they must be secure in the knowledge that their information and finances are adequately protected. For this reason, my bill requires that electronic signatures be as reliable as necessary for any given transaction. If a person is requesting information of a public nature, a secure electronic signature will not be necessary. If, however, an individual is submitting forms which contain personal, medical or financial information, adequate security is imperative and will be available.

This is not the only provision providing for personal security, however. Senator LEAHY joined me to help establish a threshold for privacy protection in this bill. The language developed by Senator LEAHY and I will ensure that information submitted by an individual can only be used to facilitate the elec-

tronic transfer of information unless it has the prior consent of the individual.

Also included is a provision establishing legal standing for electronically submitted documents. Such legal authority is necessary to attach the same importance to electronically signed documents as is attached to physically signed documents. Without this provision, electronic submission of sensitive documents would be impossible.

Finally, Mr. President the Government Paperwork Elimination Act requires that Federal agencies send individuals an electronic acknowledgement of their submission when it is received. Such acknowledgements are standard when conducting commerce online. A similar acknowledgement by Federal agencies will provide piece-of-mind for individuals which conduct electronic business with the government.

As much as individuals will benefit from this legislation, so too will American businesses. By providing companies with the option of electronic filing and storage, this bill will reduce the paperwork burden imposed by government on commerce and the American economy. It will allow businesses to move from printed forms they must fill out using typewriters or handwriting to digitally-based forms that can be filled out using a word processor. The savings in time, storage and postage will be enormous. One company, computer maker Hewlett-Packard, estimates that the section of this bill permitting companies to download copies of regulatory forms to be filed and stored digitally rather than physically will, by itself, save that company \$1-2 billion per year.

Efficiency in the federal government itself will also be enhanced by this legislation. By forcing Government bureaucracies to enter the digital information age we will force them to streamline their procedures and enhance their ability to maintain accurate, accessible records. This should result in significant cost savings for the federal government as well as increased efficiency and enhanced customer service.

Each and every year, Mr. President, Americans spend 6.6 billion hours simply filling out, documenting and handling government paperwork. This huge loss of time and money constitutes a significant drain on our economy and we must bring it under control. The easier and more convenient we make it for American businesses to comply with paperwork and reporting requirements, the better job they will do of meeting these requirements, and the better job they will do of creating jobs and wealth for our country. That is why we need this legislation.

The information age is no longer new, Mr. President. We are in the midst of a revolution in the way people do business and maintain records. This legislation will force Washington to catch up with these developments, and